

“First, Do No Harm”: Using Health Information Technology to Reduce Use of Preventive Services with Potential Harms

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Organization: Professional and Scientific Associates
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AHRQ Funding Amount: \$64,937
Summary Status as of: September 2010, Completion of Contract

Target Population: Not Applicable

Summary: Working toward the provision of high quality health care and good health outcomes means that information about health care services that should not be provided—whether preventive services or treatment—is also important to protect patients from harm. However, formative research and feedback from practicing clinicians indicates that it is extremely difficult to communicate “don’t do” recommendations effectively. As providers move to digitized health records, they expect that decision support systems will effectively communicate “don’t do” recommendations as well as other types of health care information. This discrepancy between expectation and reality creates an opportunity to explore the best ways to achieve the desired state.

This project facilitated an Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) meeting in March 2010, at which approximately 20 experts in evidence-based recommendations and guidelines, health information technology, bioinformatics, cognitive psychology, and health communications discussed ways to improve clinical decision support for preventive services with potential harms. The purpose of this 1-day meeting was to identify a research agenda and potential next steps in this area.

Project Objectives:

- Convene an expert meeting of approximately 20 participants to discuss methods of communicating “don’t do” recommendations. **(Achieved)**
- Identify a research agenda and potential next steps in developing “don’t do” recommendations effectively. **(Achieved)**

2010 Activities: Activities included the development of two white papers that helped prompt discussions at the meeting, conducting the 1-day meeting in March to identify a research agenda and next steps, and developing a meeting summary. In addition, the steering committee created a plan to disseminate reports and other products developed for, or as a result of, the meeting.

Impact and Findings: The papers developed as the result of the meeting are under review by AHRQ.

Strategic Goal: Develop and disseminate health IT evidence and evidence-based tools to improve health care decisionmaking through the use of integrated data and knowledge management.

Business Goal: Synthesis and Dissemination